# Guattarian Psychoanalysis

**Strategy – mostly for use against philosophy affirmatives**

## Links

### Embodied Experience/Discourse [45s]

#### The call for embodied speech is a moralistic demand to impose form upon abstract expression – constructing language as an inevitability which must be appropriated and owned. This manifests a liberal individualism which forecloses the potential of a communal sharing of unmappable thoughts and intensities.

Brian Massumi, 2002

Massumi is a Canadian social theorist and translator of French philosophy, he received his Ph.D from Yale University and has taught at Cornell, University of Montreal, EGS, UCLA, among other institutions. “A Shock to Thought: Expression After Deleuze and Guattari”

“There is a primacy of the collective assemblage of enunciation over language and words.” (ATP90) The “collective assemblage of enunciation” is the prong of the abstract machine that settles asignifying signs back into a functional form of expression (the “machinic assemblage of bodies” is the prong that does the same for content). It is not only the emphasis on the collective nature of the process that is worth remarking. More radically, Deleuze and Guattari are suggesting that there is an impersonal expressive agency that is not only not restricted to language, but whose process takes precedence over its operations. Expression is not in a language-using mind, or in a speaking subject vis à vis its objects. Neither is rooted in an individual body. It is not even in a particular institution, because it is the precisely the institutional system that is in flux. Expression is abroad in the world – where the potential is for what may become. It is nonlocal, scattered across a myriad struggles over what manner of life-defining nets will capture and contain that potential in reproducible articulations, or actual functions. Determinate minds, subjects, bodies, objects, and institutions are the result. The subject, its embodiment, the meanings and objects it might own, the institutions that come to governthem, these are all conduits through which a movement of expression streams. Expression adopts them for its temporary forms and substances, towards its own furtherance, in ongoing self redefintion. “The expressive is primary in relation to the possessive.” (ATP316) It was a moral precept of a certain era that one must “own” one’s enunciative position. A moral imperative was issued to speak responsibly from personal experience. But if expression is abroad in the world, it is not fundamentally ownable. It may well be morally domesticatable under certain conditions – many a moralizing capture through the ages attests to this – but only secondarily. “The ‘first’ language, or rather the first determination of language, is indirect discourse” – expression that cannot finally be attributed to a particularspeaker. “Language is not content to go from a first party to a second party, fromone who has seen to one who has not, but necessarily goes from a second party to a third party, neither of whom has seen.” (ATP76- 77). Expression is always on the move, always engrossed in its own course, overspilling individual experience, nomadically evading responsibility. It is selftransporting, serially acrossexperiences. “There is a self-movement of expressive qualities” that momentarily crystallizes into actual objects and and associated subject positions: “expressive qualities are auto-objective.” (ATP317) Expression is captured in passing by its auto-objectifications, but only ever provisionally. In C.S. Like a Thought 14 Peirces’s terms, it operates in the element of “thirdness”: already included in every passage from one to another is a potential relay to a third. Even as expression settles into a particular articulation, it is already extending what Deleuze and Guattari call “probe-heads” to a next, as-yet unknown destination: already shedding of itself, in the interests of its moving on. xii Expression’s self-movement is a continual stretch. Expression is tensile. “To express is not to depend upon; there is an autonomy of expression.” (ATP 317) What expression is most emphatically not dependent upon in the first instance is any purportedly generally applicable moral rule assigning responsibility for it or toward it. There is indeed an ethics ofexpression, which Deleuze and Guattari acknowledge and accept as a central problem. They insist on the term “ethics,” as opposed to morality, because the problem in their eyes is not in any primary fashion that of personal responsibility. It is a basically pragmatic question of how one performatively contributes to the stretch of expression in the world – or conversely prolongs its capture. This is fundamentally a creativeproblem. Where expression stretches, potential determinately emerges into something new. Expression’s tensing is by nature creative. Its passing brings into definite being. It is ontogenetic. To tend the stretch of expression, to foster and inflect it rather than trying to own it, is to enter the stream, contributing to its probings: this is co-creative, an aesthetic endeavor. It is also an ethical endeavor, since it is to ally oneself with change: for an ethics of emergence. The English translators of Guattari’s last work were right to subtitle its project an “ethico-aesthetic paradigm.”

### Mechanistic Subject [45s]

#### Their understanding of existence presupposes an a-priori coherent subject, ignoring the complexity that enables the production of subjectivities. This illusion is continued in order to uphold predetermined designs of a structured, mechanistic subject, while enacting psycho-cultural violence against those who pursue an ideal which, by definition, can never be reached.

Stephen J. Arnott, 2001

“Liminal Subjectivity and the Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm of Felix Guattari”, Limen 1/2001 – journal for theory and practice of liminal phenomena.

Before we begin this task in earnest, it will be necessary to say something about the concept of subjectivity as it is developed throughout Chaosmosis. The emphasis is always on the production of subjectivity, a thesis which opposes itself to any theory or philosophical inquiry which conceives subjectivity as given, either wholly or partially, which, in other words, insists on its a priori or transcendental status. This at once distances Guattari's approach from that of Turner, who while conceding that social and political structures are produced for the most part due to organizational requirements, **presupposes a unity of the individual which to some extent remains immune to the effects of structure and stratification**. Turner's individualism, however, is in no way a necessary requirement of his thesis, and in fact often seems to be at odds with it. For the moment we must emphasize that **Guattari admits no such essential unity, for** one **because we have no grounds, empirical or otherwise, for maintaining this presupposition, and for** another **because treating subjectivity in the light of the complex processes of production by means of which it is constituted in all its heterogeneity or diversity opens up ever new possibilities for its future production and also permits an optimism which might be denied to proponents of essential qualities of human individuation.**  The term **'production' gives rise to images** ofproduction-lines, **of highly mechanized techniques for producing objects according to preconceived design specifications and economic viability.** The processes of production constitutive of subjectivity take on an altogether different character, but will include mechanized production in their midst. Guattari opposes mechanism to 'machinism', and employs the latter to characterize production as it relates to subjectivity. Machinic production is invoked to access the extreme complexity of contributing factors and the enormous variety and variability of connectivity. Factors contributing to the production of subjectivity will not be limited to biological arrangements, familial circumstances and social milieu, although all these will be included. Technology, media, art, institutions, machinic encounters of all kinds must be seen to have an active role in the production of subjectivity. Machines of extreme diversity, not simply scientific or technological machines, but desiring-machines, aesthetic or literary machines, organic and inorganic, corporeal and incorporeal, all contributing, all making their effects felt in varying degrees of intensity - on the basis of this machinic background subjectivities are produced. By means of this machinic ontology, this machination of ontological textures, we are able "to decentre the question of the subject onto the question of subjectivity" (C p. 22). We no longer need recourse to a universal or transcendent subject, but instead diagnose processes of subjectivation operating on biological, psychic, resource etc. materials in diverse and ever-changing ways. In seeking to identify and understand the effects of factors implicated in the production of subjectivity within both historical and present cultural and social contexts, we can hope to highlight those factors whose contribution appears to be detrimental, which in other words steer both individual and collective subjectivity down paths of self-destruction and at the same time pinpoint potentially creative or positive factors which have been blocked in one way or another and thus been unable to be realized in any effective capacity. This is not to say that we can foresee in advance what effects certain kinds of tendency or paradigm are going to have, although we can hazard an educated guess, though not without risks. This conveys something of the force of Guattari's call for the reappropriation of the production of subjectivity: initially to try to be aware of or at least have a story about factors and processes which play an active part in the production of subjectivity, and then to be ready to experiment with new factors, as they present themselves or are created, without, however, having any clear ideas about the results of such experiments. For example, within an ethical perspective, we might identify the prevalence of transcendent principles licensed by religion or other kinds of moral dogma in the production of subjectivity in certain social contexts or historical periods. While we can recognize manifest positive effects of such moralities such as the institution of fairly stable communities of like-minded subjects, we can also see all-too-plainly the insularity and prejudices of such subjects and communities. Perhaps we can find a way to preserve or enhance the positive effects by other means while at the same time lessening the negative ones. Guattari suggests that this might be achieved by the introduction of a certain 'narrative element' of tolerance based on a conception of 'constellations of Universes of value' which would facilitate a respect amongst proponents of belief systems of different or even opposing types. Such considerations might seem distant from the multicultural societies which many of us now occupy, in which the recognition of the diversity of value and systems of belief is supposedly acknowledged. It is still the case, however, that political decisions are often made on the presupposition of shared community values which in actuality amount to little more than the propagation of values that are dominant rather than shared. For example, the current perceived need to introduce mechanisms of government instituted and controlled censorship of the Internet presupposes shared moral standards which demand the restriction of certain kinds of information being disseminated. Little regard is given, however, to the far-reaching effects that such censorship would illicit - for example, electronic or hypertext versions of Anti-Oedipus­ would be censored by mechanisms currently under consideration due to its use of profanity and words such as incest, masochism and so on.

### Despotic Scientism [40s]

#### Their mapping of the world through technological reason is an extension of a despotic scientism – an attempt at rationally imposed cartography on the chaotic and inarticulable nature of the world. In reality, matter and culture exceed our control through a self-organizing vitality.

Jane Bennett, 2010

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I have so far been speaking of metal as if it existed independently of other materials. But metal is always metallurgical, always an alloy of the endeavors of many bodies, always something worked on by geological, biological, and often human agencies. And human metalworkers are themselves emergent effects of the vital materiality they work. "**We are**," says Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky, "**walking, talking minerals**."38 This theme, of the "it" inside the "I," is one to which I shall return at the end of the book. Indeed, Smith's central thesis in A History of Metallogra­ phy is that **it was the human metalworkers' intense intimacy with their material that enabled them, rather than** (the less hands-on) **scientists, to be the ones to first discover the polycrystalline structure of nonorganic matter.** The desire of the craftsperson to see what a metal can do, rather than the desire of the scientist to know what a metal is**, enabled the former to discern a life in metal and thus, eventually, to collaborate more productively with it.**39 Over the past decade or so, **many political theorists, geographers, art historians, philosophers, sociologists, dancers, literary theorists, and others have explored the contributions made by affect to public culture, whereby affect refers to how moods and aesthetic sensibilities influence ethics and politics as much as do words, arguments, and reasons.** While I agree that human affect is a key player, **in this book** **the focus is on an affect that is not only not fully susceptible to rational analysis or linguis­ tic representation but that is also not specific to humans, organisms, or even to bodies : the affect of technologies, winds, vegetables, minerals.** Social science has for a long time acknowledged that **however "cultural" an assemblage (e.g., capitalism, the military-industrial complex, gender) may be, it still can resist and elude cultural control. Social constructs are widely understood as having a negative "life" of their own.** The figure of a life pushes this point. First, a life is not only a negative recalcitrance but a positive, active virtuality: a quivering protoblob of creative elan. Second, **a life draws attention not to a lifeworld of human designs or their accidental, accumulated effects, but to an interstitial field of non­ personal, alluman forces, flows, tendencies, and trajectories. The project, then, is to theorize a kind of geoaffect or material vitality, a theory born of a methodological commitment to avoid anthropocen­ trism and biocentrism - or perhaps it is more accurate to say that it is born of an irrational love of matter.** Here another "prodigious idea" comes to mind: Mario Perniola's "the sex appeal of the inorganic:' Perniola posits the existence in humans of a "neutral sexuality, an abstract and endless excitation, ... with no concern for beauty, age, and in general, form." This neutral sexuality draws human bodies to apparently dead things -to objects, stones, bits of matter. Humans, inexplic ably, are "excited" by what we otherwise believe to be "altogether inadequate stimuli."40 The "sex appeal" of the inorganic, like a life, is another way to give voice to what I think of as a shi=ering, potentially violent vitality intrinsic to matter. **Vitalists, too, have insisted on the presence of some kind of ener­ getic, free agency whose spontaneity cannot be captured by the figure of bodies or by a mechanistic model of nature. But if for vitalists like Berg­ son and Hans Driesch, matter seemed to require a not-quite-material supplement, an elan vital or entelechy, to become animate and mobile, for Deleuze and Guattari it is clear that materiality needs no animating accessory. It is figured as itself the "active principle."**

### Royal Activism

#### Mobilizing activism through representative democracy is complicit with the tactics of governmentality which totalize resistance into the narrow purviews of civic engagement and institutional politics. This saps radicality and gives rise to popular fascism; activism must overthrow demands for representation through a nomadic tactic of formlessness resistance that refuses to yield to clear political motives.

* rdem ! 1. No correlation to critical attitudes, desire for fascism, genocides via politics, nazi 2. Mandates action = politics, overwrites passivity which shows unconscious acceptances/desires, and ideological basis which impact more than material movement on continuing regimes/violence
* examples critical teaching, phil writing, micropolitics via assemblage

Marcelo Svirsky, 2010

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Rather than problematising the political, this **royal understanding of activism uses its ‘metric power’ to axiomatise politics, while simultaneously repressing activist experiences that refuse simply to align with ‘the given’ of formal politics.** **An example** of this can be seen in **the hostility of western states towards** organisations such as ‘**Wikileaks’** **or the ‘Animal rights movement’**, **each of which are immersed in creative acts of citizenship that actualise ruptures. Such new** scenes and acts are constantly at risk of being appropriated by this royal science of politics, which imposes upon them a model that channels civic participation according to established rules and concepts. Activisms that seek only to guarantee the workings of representative democracy are essentially slave activisms; they dwell in safety and their impact and potential is expected to be absorbed without drawing the system into new structures of resonance. The assumption that ‘mass participation is the lifeblood of representative democracy’ not only imposes a particular model of the political, it also reinforces a pejorative way to conceive activism**. By positing representative democracy** (or any other regime) **as the reified model of political process, theory necessarily idealises certain forms of involvement over others.** For example, classical participatory theory is often blind to **[unable to comprehend]** the creative significance of the **activist energies being unfolded in such events as critical teaching in schools, revolutionary philosophical writing, the deconstructive effect of a critical assemblage that confronts patriarchal power, or of civic homosexuality which disrupts heterosexism.** In fact, **the assumptions underlying ‘representative’ participation are troublesome** for at least two reasons. **Firstly, participation in the formal political process of ‘representative democracy’ does not in itself necessarily implicate a critical attitude or action, seeking a less repressive and more creative life**. To evidence this, **it is enough to keep in mind some fearful recent examples of mass political support for ‘representative’ state violence**, as occurred last May when thousands of Israelis marched in Tel Aviv and the streets of Jerusalem to back the killing by the Israeli Defence Forces of nine activists from the Turkish Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief, as they boarded the Mavi Marmara ship sailing to Gaza as part of a humanitarian flotilla. **Similarly**, we might remain mindful of other, no less electrifying, **cases of popular support for wars and genocides in South America, Asia, Eastern Europe and Africa, or of events such as the Holocaust. In these instances, mass participation more accurately falls within the Reichian analysis of a popular ‘desire for fascism’**–which lies worlds away from a participatory liberalism that idealises the commitment of the public to activist citizenship (see Isin 2009) and to the tolerant ‘good life’ that western democracy claims to represent. **Secondly, passivity is not necessarily a sign of political anaemia, but may be a cultural expression that requires local explanation. Here, research at times confuses the visible with the political: absence of visible mass participation might be a sign of unconscious and pre-conscious compliance with ongoing forms of oppression, and can impact more energetically on the perpetuation of a regime than can tangible acts of the body – these modes of active abandonment produce the reign of daily microfascisms. After Deleuze and Guattari, political activism may be approached** in a fundamentally different way: **without an image, without a form**. As Deleuze and Guattari make clear, **the interaction between royal and nomad science produces a ‘constantly shifting borderline’, meaning that there is always some element that escapes containment by the ‘iron collars’ of representation** (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 367; see also Deleuze 1994). This occurs when the plane of consistency is passionately thrown against the plane of organisation, **when a nomad element inserts itself in political struggles in which, for instance, the boundaries of citizenship are challenged and reopened** (as occurred in the struggle associated with the sans-papiers movement, see Isin 2009), **or barriers of ethnic segregation are challenged by new forms of interculturalism** (as occurs with bilingual forms of education). **It is through these ‘smallest deviations’ that smooth types of political activity dwell within the striated forms of state politics** (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 371). **Deleuze’s and Deleuze and Guattari’s political philosophies have created some of the conceptual tools which may be put to innovative use in activism that seeks to break with repressive traditions. Their** **alien relation** to the standards set by the royal science of politics (see Patton 2000) – an alienation laid out in the philosophical resources they draw on, in the issues and concepts that characterise their work and, principally, in the incessant movement of their thought – **points towards a richer philosophical weaponry with which to confront and possibly overcome political inhibitions, in both knowledge and practice.**

### Post-Archival Anthropocene

#### There is no longer such a thing as history. The Anthropocene has created a world that is post-archival in which narratives will have no historian to tell them. Their attempts to add another story to the bookshelf is a hopeless desire for referents that manifests as mere spectacle.

Richard Klein, 2013

(CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH THE LENS OF NUCLEAR CRITICISM diacritics, Volume 41, Number 3, 2013, pp. 82-87 (Article) Richard Klein is professor emeritus in the Department of Romance Studies at Cornell University. He is the author of Cigarettes Are Sublime (Duke), Eat Fat (Pantheon), and Jewelry Talks (Pantheon). He edited the special issue of diacritics, “Nuclear Criticism” (1984)) SS

What in the end allows Chomsky to link climate change to nuclear war and pandemics is the common thread (threat) of total destruction, the end of what he calls organized existence. It was in 1945, at the start of the nuclear era, that humans for the first time created the capacity to destroy civilization. Since then, we have arrived at new means to accomplish the same end. It will have been terminated, even if there are survivors, not because material fragments won’t remain, but because its organizing systems will have been lost. The societal role of historians depends on the existence of what Jacques Derrida called the archive (in 1984, in diacritics, in relation to total nuclear war). It consists in “a project of stockpiling, of building up an objective archive over and above any traditional oral base,”2 as well as all the systems of cataloguing and retrieval that make access to it possible, not to mention the infrastructure and markets that sustain it. The termination of organized existence, as the result of an ecological, nuclear, or pandemic catastrophe, means the end of social memory, hence the loss of societal mourning. There will be no one left to record the absence of the historian, no archive left that might permit the act of recovery, of the interiorization and recuperation of loss that mourning permits. “The burden of every [individual] death can be assumed symbolically by a culture and a social memory (that is even their essential function and their justification, their raison d’être),” Derrida writes.3 But absolute holocaust (a pleonasm: holos means total), of climate change or pandemic or total nuclear war, presupposes a future from which organized social memory will have disappeared. Such a global catastrophe may be distinguished from the Holocaust of the Second World War. In the former instance, holos means the total destruction of the possibility of all social mourning. Conversely, we may never stop mourning the latter, the Holocaust. To designate such a possibility, the total destruction of the archive, we need the future perfect tense. It offers the perspective by which we in the present can view a certain future that is supposed to have already taken place—as if we had actually alighted in some far future in order to view that future as past. Yet the existence of some impartial observer who might remember and record that final holocaust (a truly total conflagration) is not obvious, as Chomsky quickly notes, for it would mean the end of history. If the holocaust is total, if the archive is destroyed, there will have been no future in our future: a possibility that presents what linguists might call a pragmatic problem of enunciation. There will have been no future anterior— no future perfect. Yet we still need to imagine such a future historian in order to speak in the present about a catastrophic destruction of organized life about which it will not have been possible to speak historically. It is in this sense that Derrida designates this possibility, the destruction of the archive, as a fable—an event that cannot in principle be reliably described—an event that has no reliable referent in the world because if it arrived it could not be represented, socially remembered, or mourned. Like a literary event, a fable, a fiction, “the termination of an organized existence” exists only insofar as it can be talked about.4 Here may be the place to note, as has often been remarked, that Derrida, who wrote about all kinds of contemporary conditions, had nothing to say about climate change. He has been harshly and powerfully criticized for that (notably by Tom Cohen, for whom it indicates a philosophical retreat by Derrida, a refusal to venture into the inhuman territory of his own most cruel insights). Derrida died in 2004. The ecocidal implications of the Anthropocene have become widely recognized only recently. Perhaps Derrida should have realized what others had seen much earlier. He did however address the threat of total nuclear war and formulated the implications of the loss of the archive. The possibility of that loss is what allows one, despite many differences, to speak at the same time of total nuclear war, pandemic, and eco-catastrophe about which one cannot speak, except in fables or fiction. It belongs to the definition of fiction that its representations of the world are not reliably either true or false. Even if the greatest climate scientist will have been able to predict precisely the course of developments leading to environmental catastrophe and the end of organized existence, she will never have been able to say “I told you so.” The pragmatic paradox makes it impossible to represent the end, since representation always follows what it describes—not even excepting the future perfect that represents the future as having passed. Only in imagination, in fiction, can we evoke the end of organized existence. What consequences depend from that? The impossibility of its enunciation, the necessity of fiction to speak the end, explains perhaps why it is so hard to disabuse climate change deniers of their illusions, and why even whole armies of climate scientists cannot convincingly prove the truth of their alarming claims. No one is competent to speak authoritatively about what can only be viewed from beyond the end. If after climate catastrophe organized society were somehow able, after many years, to reconstitute itself in another ecology, what will have been lost? With the destruction of the archive would be lost all the institutions that depend in part or entirely on its existence—like law or mathematics, history or philosophy. But the most vulnerable (not necessarily the most precious) institution of all is literature, which has no real referent and which depends as an institution exclusively on the archive for existence. Science might revive or perhaps archeology, to the extent that their referents are material things in the world. Poetry, song, and epic might once again be emitted. But that institution we call literature, which, for our purposes, began sometime at the end of the seventeenth century in Europe, with its conventions, its reading public, its critics and merchants, editors and printers, with all the effects of intersexuality, I mean intertexuality, that its history makes possible—all that could never be revived. The fiction of climate catastrophe invites what Frances Ferguson called the nuclear sublime. She demonstrates that to speak in the future perfect about the termination of organized existence fulfills the conditions with which Kant, in the third Critique, defines the sublime aesthetic experience. It is a mode of speech that is imagined, in a fiction, to be posthumous—as if one could see one’s past from some perspective beyond the grave, a past life to which one is present only as a spectator—a ghost, as it were, viewing its past life. It’s what Kant evokes describing the walker in the Alps who turns a corner and suddenly confronts an immense abyss. The first moment of his experience is one of awe and terror before the enormity of the void, a first negative moment of non-pleasure, in which death looms. But in a second time, when the walker sees that he is safe on the edge, he can enjoy the spectacle of seeming infinite nothingness that opens at his feet before his astonished eyes. That second moment brings a feeling of what Kant calls aesthetic well-being, an immense pleasure of confronting the greatest forces, the vastest distances in the universe, and surviving, quite deliciously, unharmed. Nothing protects better from death than having died. That is why the posthumous perspective of the sublime is so enticing. Ferguson reminds us that Schiller says that suicide is the highest form of the sublime, for it requires that you imagine yourself dead.5 Nothing more perfectly illustrates the illusion of the nuclear sublime than the posthumous perspective presupposed by the cheery slogan of the Gaia Liberation Front’s Church of Euthanasia: “Save the planet, kill yourself.”6 The ultimate catastrophe is therefore a fiction, but it nevertheless is one that has very material consequences in the present. That is what distinguished it from fables that are mere inventions. It is a necessary postulation in order to recognize the symptoms and dangers of climate change, and that recognition, however muted politically, is already at work in the phantasms and dreams of people today, all over the world—from the population of Beijing to Islanders in the Pacific, to the shores of New Jersey, the coasts of Australia, the plains of Africa, etc. In our unconscious the worst may have already happened. And yet whenever we try to imagine what lies beyond our own death, or beyond the human species, after the ultimate apocalyptic disaster, we assume the condition of ghosts, between life and death, able to view in retrospective the world from which we are absent. That explains why it may be always an error, and the sign of an error, to speak apocalyptically about climate changes in tones of sublime terror and delicious awe. Indeed, if engagement in the politics of climate change doesn’t feel funny, even ridiculous—struggling to save the whole of organized life—you are taking yourself too seriously. Dwelling on the tragedy that awaits us, you have been seduced into the error of the nuclear sublime. And whenever you hear a climate change speaker adopt some lurid, mournful, or pious tone, you should ask yourself, since its standpoint is in a fiction of posthumous existence, where exactly is the speaker actually standing? And what profit is to be gained in standing there? The dolorous tones of the nuclear sublime, when they are heard in the language of climate change, are the sign that a buck is being made. On the other hand, what is required is a certain gaiety. **Friedrich Nietzsche called his wisdom a “gay science,” a term he borrowed from the troubadours; something like that is the tone one should adopt, a tone that knows it is telling a fable, a fiction, but doing it with the power and persuasiveness of “a mocking, light, fleeting, divinely untroubled, divinely artificial art that, like a pure flame, licks into unclouded skies.”7 No, not exactly that—so nineteenth century. Gaiety perhaps, but we don’t need any more pure flames springing up in a cloudless sky!**

### Linguistic Prisons

#### Language is a prison which we should continuously resist. Centering the body as a site of unintelligible affect tears the very notion, and need, for language apart. Linguistics is a violent project that continually demands the compartmentalization of anything that is representationally different.

R. Bruce Elder, 1998

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Like Reich, the French poet, playwright, diarist, letter writer, and polemicist Antonin Artaud displayed strong antipathy towards reason and "advanced civilization." Artaud shared in the radical distrust of language so common among recent thinkers. The homogenizing of experience that is the very project of modernity. the protest against which has been the central theme of this book, has begun to trouble many thinkers as it has troubled numerous artists who have worked over the past several decades. Many thinkers whom modernity's homogenization of experience has troubled have come to recognize that language is a principal instrument in this levelling of experience into a single form; therefore they have sought in the body for traces of raw, primal experience that, in being developed and synthesized, might provide an alternative mode of experience to that which modernity authorizes. Artaud wrote: The domain of the theater is not psychological but plastic and physical. And the point is not whether the physical language of theater is capable of arriving at the same psychological resolutions as the language of words, whether it can express feelings and passions as well as words; the point is whether there are not in the domain of thought and intelligence attitudes which words are incapable of capturing and which gestures. and everything that partakes of the language of space, express with greater precision than words!" Precisely; and this was Artaud's cardinal recognition that Artaud was the first to achieve. Other artists and thinkers who have sought to found an art based on more primal, more somatic, forms of awareness follow a route first travelled by Antonin Artaud. The momentous importance of Artaud is that he was the first person to come to a full recognition of the regulatory function of language in the economy of somatic experience, to protest against those restrictions and. what is more, to propose that primitive, corporeal ejaculations--dynamic actions, shrieks, gestures, and wailing-should take the place of language in the theatre of the future. Because he was committed to returning speech and writ- ing to the body and to allowing visceral impulses to guide his speaking, we cannot simply take his words for what they say; a straightforward rendering of the explicit themes of his writings-when, that is, there actually are such themes-furnishes few insights. A more indirect approach is required, one that resembles the approach we take when we attempt to discover the latent meaning that surrealist artworks conceal within their manifest forms-an approach similar to that which we took when commenting on Williard Maas's The Geography of the Body. The method resembles that of an analyst when, at the conclusion of an analytical hour, he or she identifies for the analysand, in the form of the interpretation. the recurrent themes buried in what the analysand offered during the session and helps the analysand understand their determinants. This method requires. first. a capacity to think associa- tively, and then the ability to bring those associations under the regulation of a concept. As our method we used when we considered The Geography of the Body did, such analytical methods lead us to consider more primal modes of experience than those we customarily acknowledge. Artaud felt language's betrayal viscerally. as his inability to believe that words have comfortable and unfailing relations with things induced severe torment. Language and thinking were so painful for him that at one point in his Rodez notebooks he plays with the equivalence "euphonie, aphonie ["beautiful sound," no sound--but "euphonie" is also close to his mother's name. "Euphasie." so the equivalence implies that the mother's name is a void, without sound]." His distrust of language led him to argue for an anti- language, anti-psychological theatre. The theatre he wished for would be mystical and hieratic; where language was used it would be language as incantation, or speech manipulated like an object (as language actually became in the glossolaliac poems of Artaud's later years). The events of the theatre he envisioned would not be, as those of the conventional theatre of the West are, subordinate to the written text. He spoke for a return to myth, for a ritual theatre that placed movements and gestures above words, for a theatre whose effects would be so extreme, so "cruel" that they would dislodge the audience's rationality. This theatre would exert a primitive power over its audience: to this end, its stage should surround its audience the bet- tcr to produce terror. In this way, the theatre would inscribe its text into the body. The myth of cosmic rhythms mirroring themselves in the ï¬‚ow of human libido would be made real, much in the fashion that Artaud was to experience some years after he first conceived these ideas, in the asylum at Rodez. Artaud proposed that by treating uttered sounds as pure sonic objects we can transform our bodies' vocal emissions into a sort of poor music (musique paw/re). This poor music would be preferable to conventional music because it would he so much closer to the body. Music, like non-pitched sound, inter- ests him for its somatic effects. Discussing the resources of the theatre of cruelty, he states, 'l'he need to act directly and profoundly upon the sensibility through the sense organs invites research, from the point of view of sound, into quali- ties and vibrations of sounds to which we are absolutely unaccustomed. qualities which contemporary musical instruments do not possess and which compel us to revive ancient and forgotten instruments or to create new ones. They also also compel research, beyond the domain of music, into instruments and devices which, because they are made from special combinations or new alloys of metals. can achieve a new diapason of the octave and produce intolerable or ear-shattering sounds or noises?" The emptiness of traditional music follows from its divorce from the body. Artaud strove to bring music back to the body, to redeem it by corporealizing it. 'l'he centrality of this conception of music to Artaud's poetics is evidenced by his poeti-y's taking on an increasingly musical character, as he began to use words more for their sound qualities than for their meanings-or even to find their meaning in their sound qualities. Speech, Artaud proposed, was to become musical in its pragmatics (though not in its form). Language would become material, and have material, perlocutionary effects on the bodies of those who heard it. Meaning would be a matter of corporeal sensation, and therefore an attribute of visual forms and movements, and of non- linguistic sounds, as much as of spoken or written language. What theater can still wrest from speech is its potential for expansion beyond words, for development in space, for a dissociative and vibratory effect on our sensibilities. This is the function of intonations, the particular way a word is uttered. And beyond the auditory language of sounds, this is the function of the visual language of objects. movements. attitudes. ges- tures, but provided their meaning, their physiognomy, their combinations, are extended until they become signs and these signs become a kind of alphabet. Once the theater has become aware of this language in space, which is a language of sounds, cries, lights, onomatopoeia, it must organize it by making the characters and the objects true hieroglyphs, and by utiliz- ing their symbolism and their correspondences in relation to all organs and on all levels."5 Thus Artaud became the first to revise the theory of artistic meaning by founding it on an understanding of artwork's pragmatic dimension: more than that, he became the first to propose the formulation of an artistic semi- otic based on a pragmatic or. more strictly (to borrow a tenn from ].L. Austin), a perlocutionary theory of artistic meaning. This pragmatic conception of meaning, which identifies the meaning of a word or a sound or a ges- ture with its effect on its perceiver, would remain the foundation of Artaud's conception of meaning; indeed, with time he came less interested in the symbolic and hieroglyphic dimension of artistic meaning, and tied artistic meaning ever more closely to the actual stimulative effect that artistic forms have on the body and sensation.

## Alternatives

### Ecopsychoanalysis

#### Vote negative to engage in ecopsychoanalysis. Ecological crisis requires an all-encompassing questioning of our unconscious assumptions, processes, and theories – lest a pathology for sameness ensure destruction. Ecopsychoanalysis adopts a view of the subject as embedded within a complex and interconnected ecological webbing, deconstructing individual psychoanalysis in favor of a process of fluid and experimental becoming. Within this imminent and virtual view, disaster and subjectivity presents a transformative potential for engagement within the earth’s non-linear flows.

Joseph Dodds, 2011

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The metaphor of an acrobat on a high wire referred to by Bateson (2000: 506) is particularly apt for us now. The acrobat, in order not to fall, requires maximum freedom to `move from one position of instability to another.' This is the paradox of order and disorder that we discussed in Chapter 11. In our current ecological crisis we must face the possibility that achieving the freedom and flexibility that we need to survive requires a fundamental re-examination of many of the basic coordinates of our lives, and some of our most cherished theories. In analyzing the rise and fall of past civilizations, we find that a `new technology for the exploitation of nature or a new technique for the exploitation of other men . . . gives elbow room or flexibility' but that `the using up of that flexibility is death' (Bateson 2000: 503). Like the patient stuck on a local optima that we discussed in Chapter 12, unable or unwilling to cross the threshold to a more adaptive peak, entire species, and civilizations, have in the past found themselves in dangerous dead ends and unable to change. These dead ends include those within the ecology of mind, ways of thinking and being that become pathological if they fail to evolve along with the constantly shifting relations in the constitution of natural and social ecosystems. Ecopsychoanalysis, which draws on the tools and ideas of nonlinear science, understands that our world is governed by nonlinear dynamics, to the extent that the prediction and control promised by Enlightenment rationality will always remain to some degree illusory. Instead, we need to engage with the creativity of the Earth, and follow the lines of flght we uncover, exploring `the potential for self-organization inherent in even the humblest forms of matter-energy' (DeLanda 2005: 273). Our species has experienced such severe existential threats before. One of the most extreme examples was an evolutionary bottleneck which molecular biology shows us occurred approximately 70,000 years ago, when the human species was down to the last few thousand individuals or even less. Geological evidence suggests that this near extinction may have been linked to the Toba supervolcano in Indonesia, whose eruption triggered sudden climate change with major environmental impacts (Dawkins 2004). We do not know how we emerged from that particular crisis, or how close we may have come to extinction at various other times in our history. We might reflect on these experiences as applying to the whole species an idea that Winnicott (1974: 104) once discussed in terms of the fear of breakdown in individual psychoanalysis. For Winnicott, this fear refers to a breakdown that has already occurred, but it was a catastrophe which took place before there was yet a subject to fully experience it with a reflective consciousness. At the risk of anthropocentrism, we might do well to consider Dennett's (2003: 267) point that in many ways we do occupy a unique position in the history of the Earth, as `wherever lineages found themselves on local peaks of the adaptive landscape, their members had no way of so much as wondering whether or not there might be higher, better summits on the far side of this valley or that.' Despite all the defensive reasons to not know which we explored in Chapters 4±7, we are, to some extent at least, becoming conscious of the enormity of the danger which confronts us. Today we are forced to think in these complex terms, to wonder about other valleys and other peaks on the plane of immanence, our virtual realm of possibility, to find a path through the current deadlock. As we saw in Part I of this book, these are difficult times. As Bateson (2000: 495) writes, the `massive aggregation of threats to man and his ecological systems arises out of errors in our habits of thought at deep and partly unconscious levels.' The contribution of psychoanalysis is precisely to help us to overcome such errors through investigating their unconscious roots. Ecopsychoanalysis recognizes the need for a radical questioning of our theories, whether psychoanalytic, philosophical, scientific or political, and the corresponding ways of living individually and collectively that they make possible and reflect. However, **it does so through a respectful engagement with the best that our various traditions have to offer, entering into uncanny new symbioses, making these disciplines strange to themselves not in order to destroy them but to make them more vital and alive**. Despite the gravity of our situation, there are `patches of sanity still surviving in the world' (Bateson 2000: 495), ideas in the ecology of mind worth exploring, helping us to construct a new alpha function we can only hope is capable of dreaming at the precipice. This book has sought to uncover what some of the components of this might be, focusing in particular on the constructive synergy between psychoanalysis, complexity theory, ecology, and the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari. **Ecopsychoanalysis wonders whether it is precisely in the very severity of the desperate ecological situation we face that a great opportunity lies for re-imagining the human, our societies, and our place in the world.** It is in the ecopsychological spirit of nurturing hope while facing despair that this book was written. However, there is no `big Other' (Zizek 2007) to guarantee our success, or even our future existence. In a chaotic world without certainty, ecopsychoanalysis can turn to the experimental pragmatics of Deleuze and Guattari (2003a: 161): `**Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers . . . find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times**.' Assumptions according to which we have long lived our lives collapse as we begin to feel the disturbing effects of the hyperobject of climate change on the ecology of mind. **Ecopsychoanalysis** itself can be viewed as a hyperobject in that it does not yet fully exist. It **should not be seen as an end state but a process of becoming, a work in progress, a meshwork emerging at the interstices of the three ecologies, and the elaboration of an alpha function that is able to think and dwell in our new uncanny home.** As Bateson (2000: 512) writes, `**we are not outside the ecology for which we plan ± we are always and inevitably a part of it. Herein lies the charm and the terror of ecology.' Ecopsychoanalysis can never occupy an outside from which to explore and engage with the new strange ecology(s), but is always already extimate with it** (Lacan 1992: 139). For all its chaos, because of all its chaos, the world is still a place of wonder, and we can only hope that we find ways of staying in it at least a little while longer. The nonlinearity and chaos of nature, and the forms of thinking required to sustain our relationship to it beyond the limited horizons of our experience, are both frightening and liberating. **Yet, despite the anxiety, guilt and terror that climate change forces us to face, this moment of crisis can also offer us an opportunity for a more open vision of ourselves, as subjects, as societies, and as a species among the interconnected life systems of the Earth.**

### Militant Pragmatics

#### Vote negative to engage in militant pragmatics – a micropolitical resistance to the hierarchical organization of grammar, language, and semiotics. Pragmatic praxis engages in a fluctuating politics of assemblage, confronting the abstract signifiers which affect material consequences. This overturns the political structures of grammar which construct standards of competency and signification by constantly redrawing maps to be asignfying and recognizing structures as socially constructed.

Félix Guattari, 2011

Guattari was a schizo/psychoanalyst, actively ran an experimental mental clinic at La Borde, studied under Jacques Lacan, was involved in the Pirate Radio and militant movements in Europe, and wrote extensively with a variety of intellectuals including Gilles Deleuze and Antonio Negri. “Lines of Flight: For another world of possibilities” translated by Andrew Goffey, Bloomsbury Academic, pg 170-173

**'Do it' could be the order-word for a pragmatic micropolitics.** Not only can the Chomskyan axiom of grammaticality (S) no longer be accepted as going without saying, but it becomes the object of a sort of militant opposition**. One refuses to consider that semiotic assemblages** of all kinds **have necessarily to organise themselves into phrases that are compatible with** the system of **dominant significations. A pragmatic order-word will therefore not seek** to interpret, **to reorganise significations**, to compose with them; **it will postulate that beyond their systems of redundancy, it is always possible to transform a semiotic assemblage. There is a** primary **political decision here**, a primary axiom of pragmatics: **the refusaI to legitimate the signifying power manifested by the 'evidence' of dominant 'grammaticalities'.** The appreciation of a 'degree of grammaticality' then becomes a political matter. Rather than agreeing to remain prisoner of the redundancy of signifying tracings, one will endeavour to fabricate a new map of competence, new a-signifying diagrammatic coordinates. This is what the Leninists did during their rupture with the social-democrats, when they decided, with a certain arbitrariness, that on the basis of the constitution of a party of a new kind a split would be created between the proletarian avant-garde and the masses, the effect of which would be to radically transform their passive attitude, their tendency to spontaneity, and their 'economist' tendency. The fact that his 'Leninist transformation' later toppled over into the field of redundancy of Stalinist bureaucracy shows that in this domain, the systems of maps and tracings can always be inverted, that no structural foundation, no theoretical legitimation can definitively guarantee the maintenance of a revolutionary 'competence'. Whatever the case may be, the Leninists made a new matter of expression rise up from the social field, a new map of the political unconscious, in relation to which aIl productions ofutterances, including those ofbourgeois movements, would be constrained to determine themselves. Another transformation of the unconscious map of the revolutionary movement had been produced by the Marxists of the First International, who literally 'invented' a new kind of working class, anticipating the sociological transformations that industrial societies were to experience (in effect, the class on which the communist movement of Marx's era rested was essentially composed of artisans and journeymen: it was only at the end of the nineteenth century that it really began to be proletarianised). A micropolitical pragmatics will never accept systems of redundancy, which seem to be the most stuck in an 'impasse, as a fait accompli; it will endeavour to make processes of diagrammatisation emerge, 'analysers: collective assemblages of enunciation that will depose individuated modes of subjectivation and will form the basis on which previous micropolitical relations will be registered and reshuffled. But, once again, it cannot be a matter here simply of organisational, programmatic or theoretical instruments, but fundamentally of mutations in social pragmatics. The task of a revolutionary pragmatics will thus consist in bringing about connections between transformational systems able to annul the effects of signifying generation. One is thus in the presence of two micropolitical orientations concerning semiotic systems as a whole. Diagrammatic transformations are thus able to carry their effects into no matter what semiotic register: whether it is a matter of symbolic semiologies (with mimetic or transitivist effects, for example), signifying semiologies (with systems of expression based on a limited range of discrete elements: phonemes, graphemes, distinctive features, etc.), or even natural modes of encoding. ln each situation the pragmatic objective will consist in setting out the nature of the crystallisations of power that operate around a dominant transformational component: the map of black holes, semiotie branches and lines of flight (in Asiatic empires, the establishment of a despotie signifying writing, for example, or the emergence of a systematie signifying delirium in paranoia). Overthrow by a new diagrammatie component will reduce the effects of signifiance and individuation and lead to enunciation being nothing more than one element amongst others in machinie assemblages (the emancipation of a writing machine from its signifying function in poetie, musieal, mathematical work, etc.). Pragmatie transformations will assemble their composition synchronically as a function of diverse political strategies; but they will equally organise their mutations diachronieally on a machinic rhizome. Although evolution goes globaUy in the direction of a growing deterritorialisation, punctuated by always more brutal reterritorialisation on artificial stratifications, one really cannot set out general laws concerning them. And that is how it should be! **Pragmatic assemblages are machinic; they do not depend on universal laws properly speaking; they are subject to historical mutation.** Thus one can speak of a 'romantie complex: of a 'Popular Front complex: a 'Resistance complex: a 'positivist complex: aU of which have maintained their effects beyond their original historical localisation, without it being possible to give them the universal character that psychoanalysts accord to the Oedipus complex, or Maoists to the 'revisionist' complex. **Pragmatic markers are not universaIs, they can always be called into question**. Let us consider, for example, the fact that the most territorialised segmentarities have a 'tendency' to take control of more molar segmentarities. This is, in effect, a kind of law. But it only remains valid in the context of a given period, to the point when a revolutionary situation, overturning the maps of competence, reveals the existence of another machinism that was in the subterranean process ofgnawing away at an earlier equilibrium. Differentiating coefficients of deterritorialisation ought nonetheless to allow political sequences to be vectorised - a'line' of schizophrenisation versus a paranoid'line' for example -- in the struggle against bureaucratie transformations. But **one will never be able to deduce from this, as some have believed they could consider so doing on the basis of Anti-Oedipus, that it is a matter here of a new Manichean alternative**.lt will only ever be a matter ofa provisional orientation. **Different kinds of entrance points must always be possible in a pragmatic system: that of performances of tracings or that of the competence of maps.** In the first case, one will accept the repetitive character of deadlocked libidinal investments, one will even rely on them, so as to guarantee the minimal deterritorialisation of a body without organs on the basis of which other transformational operations will be possible (example: the positive aspects of regionalist struggles). In the other case, one will rely directly on a line of flight able to make the strata explode and bring about new semiotic branchings. Schematically speaking, and to borrow a difterent terminology, one can say ofthe **generative pragmatics** that it will concern itself specifically with empty and cancerous bodies without organs,whilst the **transformational pragmatics** will concern itself with full bodies without organs connected to the plane of consistency. But **what brings these two points of entry together is that** **the simple fact of introducing a mode of semiotisation that concerns them in particular, the simple fact of memorising potentialities, of noting tracings and drawing up maps already sketches out diagrammatic effects: the simple fact of deciding to write down one's dreams, for example, rather than passively interpreting them, the simple fact of sketching or miming them, could transform the map of the unconscious**. One of the formidable traps of psychoanalysis is that it has managed to rely on the minimal transformation that the simple fact ofhaving a discourse outside the habituaI conditions of enunciation represents: the entire 'mission' of psychoanalysis having hitherto consisted in 'extinguishing' the diagrammatic effects of this transformation through the technique of the transference, and in pushing the discourse of the patient back into new grids of signifying redundancy.